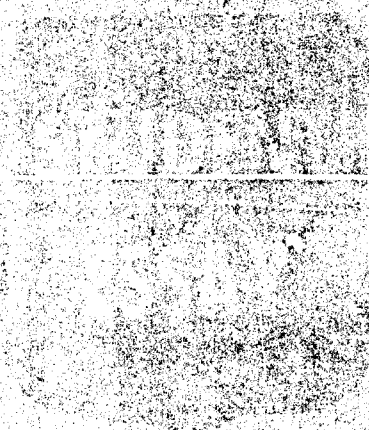


AD A129156



RECEIVED BY THE DIRECTOR  
OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

RECEIVED BY THE DIRECTOR  
OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## **DISCLAIMER NOTICE**

**THIS DOCUMENT IS BEST QUALITY  
PRACTICABLE. THE COPY FURNISHED  
TO DTIC CONTAINED A SIGNIFICANT  
NUMBER OF PAGES WHICH DO NOT  
REPRODUCE LEGIBLY.**

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) Leadership as a Force Multiplier: The Joshua L. Chamberlain Example		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED STUDENT ESSAY
		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
7. AUTHOR(s)  LTC Fred J. Hillyard		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS US Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS  Same		12. REPORT DATE 8 May 1983
		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 29
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report)  Unclassified
		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)  <b>Approved for public release distribution unlimited.</b>		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Civil War general Joshua L. Chamberlain, selected by TRADOC as the leadership model in the new (draft) FM 22-100, is shown to meet the Clausewitzian criteria for "military genius;" he exemplifies courage, strength of body and soul, sensitive and discriminating judgement, skilled intelligence, intellect (to include presence of mind and imagination), determination and character.		

**DTIC**  
**ELECTE**  
**S** JUN 10 1983 **D**  
**A**

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM

LEADERSHIP AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER:  
THE JOSHUA L. CHAMBERLAIN EXAMPLE

INDIVIDUAL ESSAY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Fred J. Hillyard  
Infantry

US Army War College  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013  
8 May 1983



Accession For	
NTIS GRA&I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Avail and/or	
Dist	Special
A	

Approved for public release  
distribution unlimited.

#### ABSTRACT

Civil War general Joshua L. Chamberlain, selected by TRADOC as the leadership model in the new (draft) FM 22-100, is shown to meet the Clausewitzian criteria for "military genius"; he exemplifies courage, strength of body and soul, sensitive and discriminating judgement, skilled intelligence, intellect (to include presence of mind and imagination), determination and character.

Today, when you compare the military force ratios of the United States and the Soviet Union you quickly realize that the Soviets have an awesome numerical advantage. Obviously, the United States must rely on force ratio multipliers, leverage, to remain credible as a military power relative to her principle adversary, the Soviets. The US Army is pursuing a wide range of ambitious programs that will contribute to the force ratio equation. General Edward C. Meyer, Chief of Staff, US Army, has grouped these programs into five force multiplier categories or what he calls five "levers." The five levers are: quality (to include leadership quality), deployment and deployability, ingenuity, active and reserve integration, and collective security.<sup>1</sup>

This essay will look only at a narrow slice of the quality of leadership issue. Leadership historically has proven to be a key battlefield force multiplier. General Meyer has established leadership as one of the Army's seven major goals. "A Total Army whose leaders at all levels possess the highest ethical and professional standards committed to mission accomplishment and well-being of subordinates."<sup>2</sup> At the recent Leadership Conference--1982, General Meyer said that "the lessons that come from all of the wars of the recent past are that it is quality armies that win . . . and a quality army demands quality leaders."<sup>3</sup> General Meyer's definition of leadership is: ". . . basically the ability to influence, and it is the ability to influence people to do things they may not want to do or things

they have not thought about doing."<sup>4</sup> Leadership has also been emphasized in recent military preparedness discussions and in the new doctrinal literature. Here are a few examples.

The Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, stated in his latest Report to the Congress:

The military success of the Israelis in Lebanon and the British in the Falklands must be accounted for on a much broader basis than just equipment performance. The Israelis and the British prevailed because of the quality of their manpower and leadership at all levels.<sup>5</sup>

The Army's new Air Land Battle Doctrine field manual, FM 100-5: Operations, states that "Leadership is the crucial element of combat power."<sup>6</sup> The implication is that leadership is more important than the other three elements--maneuver, fire power, and protection. The coordinating draft of the new military leadership field manual, FM 22-100, points out that "Throughout history . . . leaders have often had a greater impact on the outcomes of battle than the number of soldiers or technology."<sup>7</sup>

Field Manual 22-100: Military Leadership is the primary resource for small unit leadership education in the Army. The soon to be published and long overdue new edition focuses on a brand new leadership philosophy based on "what a leader must be, know and do to lead soldiers successfully in peace and war."<sup>8</sup> The instructional technique of case studies and historical role models will be used extensively in the new manual. It will not be the typical step by step, dull field manual; as a minimum it will be

interesting reading. I think it will be well received by the junior and senior leadership of the Army.

Who do you think is the best historical role model for today's young officers and non-commissioned officers to study to be prepared for tomorrow's leadership challenges and battlefields? Which American soldier past or present would you pick? Surprisingly enough, Training and Doctrine Command has selected a Civil War volunteer colonel from Maine, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, as their principle model for the new leadership philosophy. The draft FM 22-100 stated that ". . . Colonel Joshua Chamberlain (was) one of the greatest small-unit combat leaders in the history of war. He helped develop and lead a cohesive unit that had a large impact on the outcome of the civil war."<sup>9</sup> FM 22-100 goes on to say, "We can develop leaders like Joshua Chamberlain in our schools and units. You can become this kind of leader. This is your challenge and responsibility."<sup>10</sup>

My first thought is why Joshua Chamberlain? The notion that leadership is developed through education and experience is somewhat lost in the Chamberlain model. Chamberlain was not a professional soldier; he was a volunteer. He had no formal education in military leadership. He had not been educated at the Military Academy but instead at a small liberal arts college, Bowdoin (Maine) and at the Bangor Theological Seminary (Maine). He was a professor of rhetoric and oratory at Bowdoin College when, at the age of 33, he took off his academic robes to don the Union blue of the Army of the Potomac. On 8 August 1862 Governor



Washburn tendered Joshua L. Chamberlain a commission as lieutenant colonel (second in command) of the new 20th Regiment Infantry, Maine Volunteers. A West Pointer who had been awarded the Medal of Honor at Bull Run, Colonel Adelbert Ames, was the commander.<sup>11</sup> Colonel Ames informally and by example taught Chamberlain and the other officers and men of the 20th Maine what he knew about leadership and soldiering. The 20th Maine became a disciplined, cohesive unit. Three years, 24 battles, six wounds, four citations for bravery, and three promotions later, Brevet Major General Chamberlain mustered out of the Army.<sup>12</sup>

Another concern I have is that our young officer and non-commissioned officer students of leadership may not relate to the muskets, bayonets, bugle calls, visual commands, foot mobility, and shoulder to shoulder battle formation of the Civil War when their thoughts are normally of the sophisticated weapon and vehicle systems, extended communications and rapid maneuver of the modern battlefield.

My questioning of the choice of the Joshua Chamberlain leadership role model is somewhat softened by my agreement that "much of the face of battle will not change. Human nature does not change. The attributes of leadership required to develop cohesion and discipline and to inspire soldiers in battle have not changed. The payoff in battle is moral forces of soldiers-- confidence, morale, courage and a will to fight."<sup>13</sup> Leadership is defined in the new FM 22-100 as, "a process by which a soldier

applies his beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills to influence others to accomplish the mission."<sup>14</sup>

It has been said that "great events bring forth great leaders."<sup>15</sup> On 2 July 1863 the relatively inexperienced officers and men of the 20th Maine Infantry Regiment found themselves engaged in one of the most significant small unit actions in American history, the Battle of Little Round Top at Gettysburg. Colonel Joshua Chamberlain, the 20th Maine Commander, rose to the occasion. Had Chamberlain's leadership failed that late afternoon of 2 July 1863, the course of events of Gettysburg, the Civil War, and our nation might well have been drastically different.

In recent years the writings of Carl von Clausewitz, the renowned Prussian theorist on war, have regained popularity for scholarly research and study of the art and science of war. Clausewitz, in his classic work, On War, wrote, "the personalities of . . . (commanders) are such important factors that in war above all it is vital not to underrate them."<sup>16</sup> Clausewitz attributes a great deal of importance to the "military genius" of the commander. I think it would be interesting then to analyze the personality and actions of Colonel Joshua Chamberlain against the Clausewitzian model of "military genius." Certainly if Chamberlain was a "military genius" in Clausewitzian terms, it would strengthen the case for his selection as the historical model military leader for the Army's future leaders to study and emulate.

According to Clausewitz, "those gifts of mind and temperment that in combination bear on military activity . . . taken together constitute the essence of military genius." He describes the climate of war as a realm of danger, exertion and suffering, uncertainty, and chance. The "gifts of mind and temperment" that he outlines as necessary for the "military genius" to operate in the "climate of war" are: courage, strength of body and soul, sensitive and discriminating judgment, skilled intelligence, intellect (to include presence of mind and imagination), and the "military genius" must also have a longing for honor and renown, a grasp of national policy and character.<sup>17</sup> Does Chamberlain match up? Let's see.

#### War is the Realm of Danger

##### • Courage

Clausewitz tells us that, "War is the realm of danger; therefore, courage is the soldier's first requirement. Courage is of two kinds: courage in the face of personal danger, and the courage to accept responsibility."<sup>18</sup>

A good example of Joshua Chamberlain's courage to accept responsibility is his accepting a commission as a lieutenant colonel of volunteers being keenly aware of his own lack of military knowledge. His wisdom and understanding of command responsibility was conversely demonstrated by his not accepting the colonel of the regiment position that the Governor offered him. He said that he wanted a subordinate position but one in which he could master the art of command in war.<sup>19</sup>

Probably the first demonstration of Chamberlain's courage in face of personal danger came during the 20th Maine's baptism of fire on the last day of the battle at Antietam, 20 September 1862. The 20th Maine, as part of General Porter's Fifth Corps, was retreating across the Potomac River under fire from the bluff. Chamberlain showed conspicuous courage and calmness as he sat astride his horse steadying his men through a deep place in the river where he had seen several soldiers from a New York regiment drowned. At all times he was an inviting target for Confederate marksmen. Bullets fell all around the crossing site. Chamberlain was not hit by enemy fire; however, his horse was shot out from under him and Chamberlain returned to the Maryland shore on foot with his men.<sup>20</sup>

At Fredericksburg, Colonel Ames took temporary command of a three regiment formation. As a consequence, Lieutenant Colonel Chamberlain took temporary command of the 20th Maine. The 20th Maine saw considerable action. Chamberlain's courage, sound leadership, and understanding of battlefield dynamics demonstrated that he had been a good student of Colonel Ames.<sup>21</sup>

Chamberlain was promoted to colonel and took command of the 20th Maine Infantry Regiment on 20 May 1863 as a result of Colonel Ames being promoted to brigadier general and transferred to the 11th Corps. The battle at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania took place less than two months after Colonel Chamberlain took command.

Joshua Chamberlain's biographer wrote years later that "Chamberlain had a reputation during the war of being a severe disciplinarian but one who was also just, who looked after his men, who shared their hardships, who expected no feat of courage that he was not ready to participate in or even to lead. The result was that he had a magnificently trained and loyal command."<sup>22</sup>

The battle of Little Round Top at Gettysburg on 2 July 1863 clearly illustrates Chamberlain's courage and his ability to influence his men to accomplish the mission. It will also be useful in analyzing Joshua Chamberlain in light of other Clausewitzian traits of "military genius."

Colonel Chamberlain was awarded the Union's highest award for valor, the Medal of Honor, for his courageous leadership of the 20th Maine Regiment on 2 July 1863 at Little Round Top. He and his determined command successfully defended the Union's extreme left flank from an equally determined Confederate regiment for possession of Little Round Top. The award citation reads simply, "Daring heroism and great tenacity in holding his position on Little Round Top against repeated assaults, and carrying the advance position on the Great Round Top. . . ."<sup>23</sup>

Chamberlain and his regiment arrived at Gettysburg at 7 a.m., 2 July 1863. They had marched 107 miles in five days to include 26 miles during the last day and night.<sup>24</sup> They were joining the Union Army of the Potomac hasty defensive position none too soon.

As if by chance (Clausewitz said, "War is the realm of chance."<sup>25</sup>), Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had made contact with the Union Army near Gettysburg. As the 20th Maine arrived on the field both Armies were trying desperately to concentrate their forces for what would be recorded as one of the most decisive battles of the Civil War. Lee had hesitantly attacked on the 1st of July before all his forces were assembled. Nevertheless, he enjoyed success and pushed the then outnumbered Union forces back to defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge.<sup>26</sup> The Confederate soldiers' morale was high after this early success at Gettysburg, coupled with their May 1863 dramatic victory at Chancellorsville.

As the bulk of the Union Army arrived late evening on the 1st and early morning on the 2nd the numerical advantage shifted to the Army of the Potomac and General George Meade had taken command of the Union Army. The predominant terrain on the southern flank of the Union position was a pair of hills known as Little and Great Round Top. In the confusion of re-positioning forces on 2 July the Round Tops were left unoccupied. Lee's plan for attack on 2 July included an early attack against the southern flank by General Longstreet's Corps. However, two events took place, as if by chance, that delayed the attack. Jeb Stuart and the Confederate Cavalry had not arrived on the field to reconnoiter the routes to the attack positions. The guides that were used to maneuver Longstreet's corps into position got lost and caused a frustrated Longstreet to countermarch his entire corps to find a

better route and to avoid observation from what he thought to be a Union observation post atop Little Round Top. Valuable time was lost.<sup>27</sup> When the attack did begin about 4 p.m. the Confederates were tired and thirsty. It was a very hot day. Colonel Oates, the Commander of the 15th Alabama Regiment, the unit that would attack the Union's left flank, stopped his regiment at Plum Run after the long march-countermarch to get some much needed water. The 15th Alabama Regiment had also marched 25 miles from Chambersburg to Gettysburg starting at 3 a.m. that same morning. Twenty-two soldiers gathered the Regiment's canteens and went off to fill them. In the meantime the order came to attack at once. The 15th Alabama Regiment attacked without water up and over the unoccupied Great Round Top. Exhausted, the confederates stopped for a 10-minute break. The water detail got misoriented and was captured, canteens and all, by Union forces. Colonel Oates recommended that artillery be brought into position on Great Round Top and that he establish a defensive position there, for Great Round Top dominated the entire Cemetery Ridge. Instead, he was ordered to continue the attack to seize Little Round Top.<sup>28</sup>

When Longstreet's attack began about 4 p.m., the 20th Maine was moved forward with General Barnes' division to join General Sickles' corps in the Devil's Den/Wheat Field area.<sup>29</sup> Yet another incident happened by chance that caused Chamberlain and the 20th Maine Regiment to get a new mission and to arrive atop Little Round Top only moments before Colonel Oates and his 15th Alabama Regiment.

General Meade did not like General Sickles' forward defensive positions. He was concerned about the left flank. He dispatched his chief engineer, General Warren, to check the left flank positions. To General Warren's amazement he saw that the Round Tops were unoccupied except for a small signal station. See Figure 1.<sup>30</sup> He immediately recognized the importance of the terrain and sent a message to General Meade recommending a division be sent to Little Round Top immediately. The 5th Corps, General Sykes' corps, was to provide the division. Colonel Strong Vincent's brigade of General Barnes' division was the closest available brigade. One account of the battle states that Colonel Vincent intercepted the messenger enroute from General Sykes to General Barnes and took it upon his own to be the first brigade to respond to General Warren's call for help. As it was the 20th Maine was the last regiment in the brigade order of march and occupied the left flank position atop Little Round Top.<sup>31</sup> It was the left flank position of the entire Union line. Colonel Chamberlain wrote later in his after action report that "I was told 'to hold that ground at all hazards.' This was the last word I heard from him."<sup>32</sup> Colonel Vincent was mortally wounded later that day. Chamberlain quickly surveyed the terrain. It was rough, rocky and wooded. His defensive line generally faced southwest towards the higher hill mass known as Great Round Top. Between the two Round Tops was a smooth, thinly wooded hollow. Chamberlain posted B Company as a line of skirmishes across the hollow to extend his left flank. Artillery fire was constant and heavy all along his line as Colonel Chamberlain moved about,



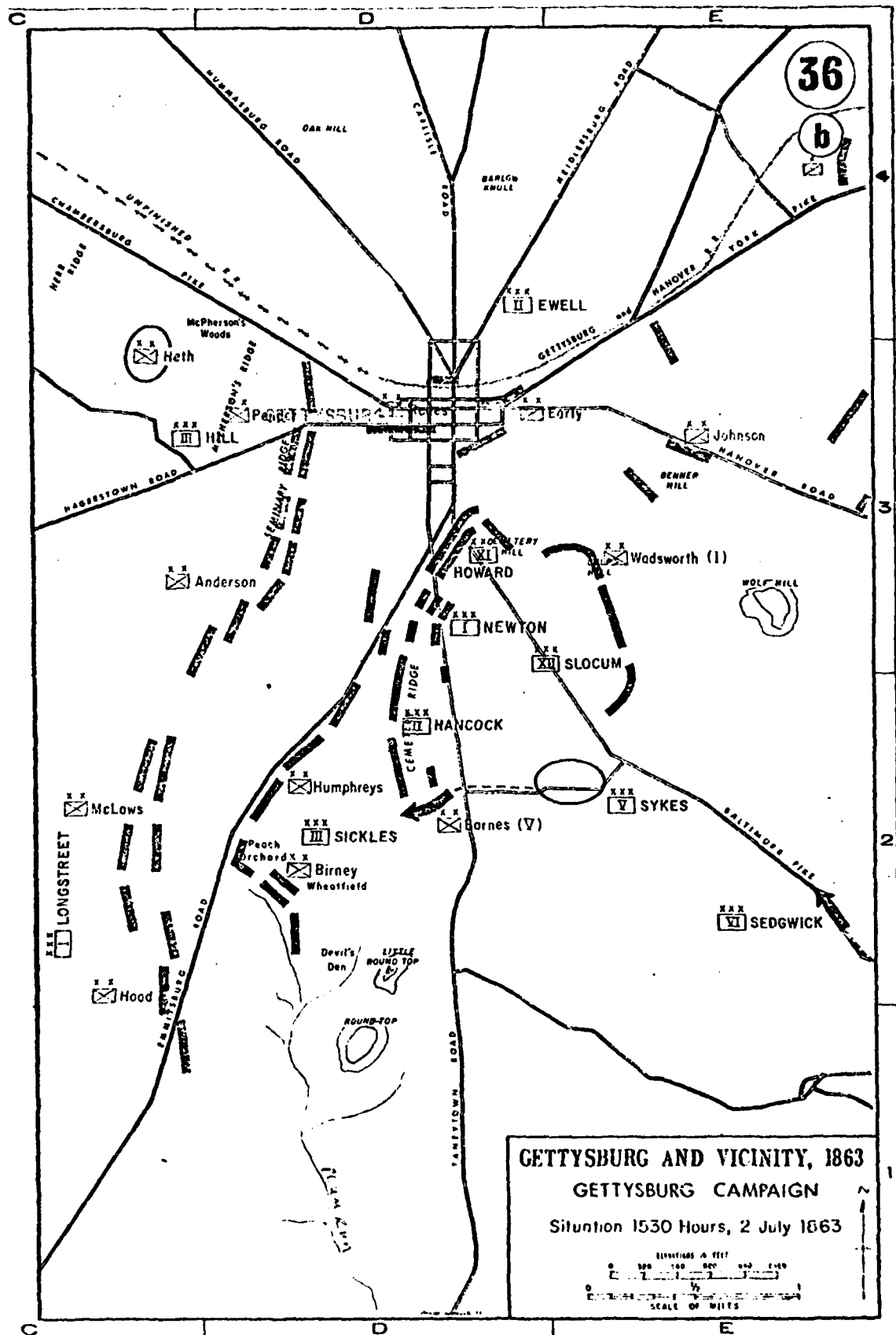
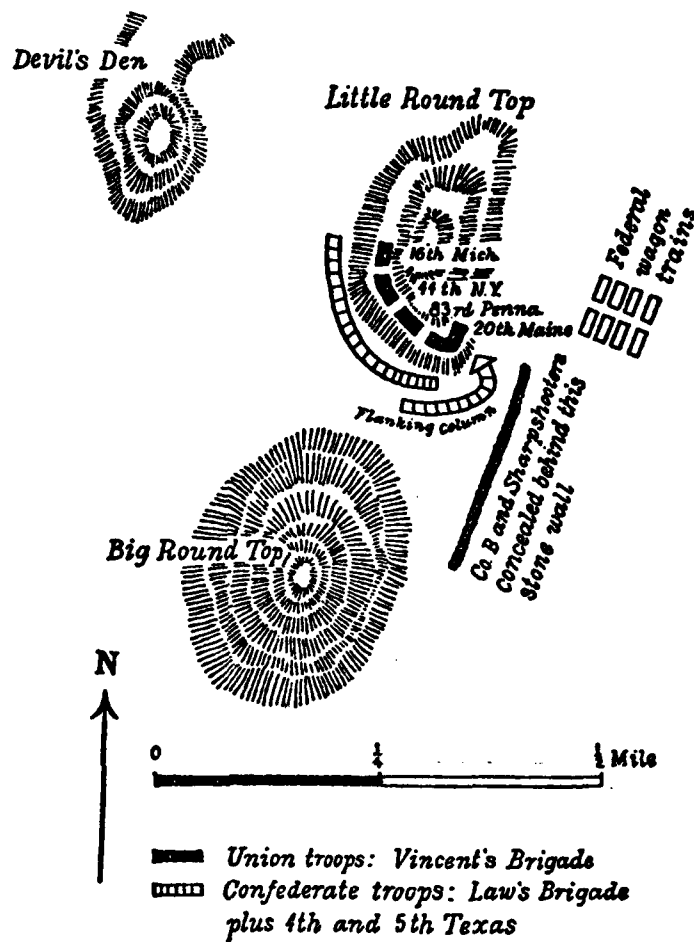


Figure 1

dangerously exposed, positioning his troops. Chamberlain wrote, "my formation was scarcely complete when the artillery was replaced by a fierce infantry assault . . . it very soon involved the right of my regiment and gradually extended along my entire front. The action was quite sharp and at close quarters. In the midst of this an officer from my center informed me of some important movement that was going on to his front, beyond that of the line with which we were engaged."<sup>33</sup> With total disregard for his own personal safety, Colonel Chamberlain climbed up on a large boulder to observe the movement. He saw what he soon discovered to be the 15th Alabama Regiment attempting to envelop and turn the left flank of the Union Army held by the 20th Maine.<sup>34</sup>

With great presence of mind, while his regiment was under heavy enemy fire, Chamberlain innovated new tactics and maneuvers to stretch his regiment to the left and to bend the left wing (left half of his formation) to be at right angles with the right wing. The 20th Maine's unorthodox formation occupied about twice the normal frontage with some companies of the right wing stretched by intervals to a single rank.<sup>35</sup> See figure 2.<sup>36</sup> Colonel Oates wrote later that the 20th Maine reached their defensive position "ten minutes before my arrival, and they piled a few rocks from boulder to boulder, making the zig-zag line more complete, and were concealed behind it ready to receive us."<sup>37</sup> Initially the Alabamians were surprised by the concealed 20th Maine positions and staggered back after an initial intense volume of fire. But they pushed back again and again. The fierce battle



Infantry Positions at Little Round Top

Figure 2

ebbed and flowed on that bloody hillside for more than an hour. The attacking commander, Colonel Oates, recalled later that, "We drove the Federals from their strong position; five times they rallied and charged us--twice coming so near that some of my men had to use the bayonet."<sup>38</sup> Colonel Chamberlain's personal account of the battle records:

We opened a brisk fire at close range . . . they soon fell back . . . only to burst forth again with a shout. . . . They pushed up to within a dozen yards of us before the terrible effectiveness of our fire compelled them to break. . . . They renewed the assault . . . and for an hour the fighting was severe. Squads of the enemy broke through our line in several places, and the fight was literally hand to hand. The edge of the fight rolled backward and forward like a wave. The dead and wounded were now in front and then in our rear. Forced from our position, we desperately recovered it, and pushed the enemy down to the foot of the slope. The intervals of the struggle were seized . . . to gather ammunition from the cartridge boxes of disabled friend or foe on the field, . . . the enemy seemed to have gathered all their energy for their final assault. . . . When a strong force emerged . . . opening a heavy fire, . . . we opened on them as well as we could with our scanty ammunition snatched from the field.

It did not seem possible to withstand another shock like this now coming on. Our loss had been severe . . . only a desperate chance was left for us. . . . My men were firing their last shot. . . .

It was imperative to strike before we were struck by this overwhelming force in a hand-to-hand fight, which we could not probably have withstood or survived. At that crisis, I ordered the bayonet.<sup>39</sup>

Chamberlain had to limp along the line to give the orders for the bayonet charge-counter attack. His right foot had been cut by a flying shell fragment and his left thigh had been badly bruised when a musket ball was stopped by his sabre scabbard.<sup>40</sup> Again his tactics were non-standard for he ordered what was left of the Regiment to execute a "right wheel forward" in two phases; first the left wing had to come on line with the right and then attack together down the rugged steep. Amazingly enough, the imaginative tactics surprised the Alabamians and overwhelmed them. Throughout the charge the courageous Chamberlain led by example. At one point a Confederate officer fired his pistol at Chamberlain's head from point blank range. He missed and promptly surrendered and handed over his sword to Chamberlain.<sup>41</sup> As the Alabamians fought their way back down the slope the heretofore unengaged B Company, 20th Maine opened fire from across the hollow. The confused and exhausted Alabamians withdrew in defeat. Later Colonel Oates would write, "There never were harder fighters than the Twentieth Maine and their gallant Colonel. His skill and persistency and the great bravery of the men saved Little Round Top and the Army of the Potomac from defeat."<sup>42</sup> The battle for Little Round Top was certainly testimony to Colonel Chamberlain's exemplary courage, Clausewitz's first requirement for "military genius."

#### War is the Realm of Physical Exertion and Suffering

##### • Strength of Body and Soul

Clausewitz wrote that "War is the realm of physical exertion and suffering. These will destroy us unless we can make ourselves

indifferent to them, and for this birth or training must provide us with a certain strength of body and soul."<sup>43</sup> The Civil War campaigns that Joshua Chamberlain fought were chocked full of physical exertion and suffering. The long, grueling march from Chancellorsville to Gettysburg and the many similar marches of the Army of the Potomac infantry were certainly tests of Chamberlain's physical stamina. He stood the tests magnificently.

An awesome example of Chamberlain's strength of body and soul was his action on 18 June 1864 during the battle of Petersburg. Colonel Chamberlain, now a Brigade Commander, personally led the final bayonet charge against a numerically superior confederate force. He led the charge on foot for his horse had been shot out from under him during the battle. When the color bearer was shot dead at his side, "Chamberlain picked up the flag himself . . . and raced forward in the face of fire so fierce that men leaned into it as they would toward a heavy wind."<sup>44</sup> As he turned to signal his brigade he was shot through both hips by a single minie ball. "Unable to move his feet and unwilling to fall, he thrust his sabre into the ground and rested both hands on the hilt."<sup>45</sup> From this position, he continued to shout orders and direct the charge until loss of blood overpowered his will and brought him first to his knees, then his elbows and finally to the ground. The surgeons that initially examined his wounds gave him almost no chance to live. Chamberlain's obituary was prematurely published in several New York newspapers.<sup>46</sup> It was Chamberlain's determination to live coupled with the skill of two surgeons from

his former brigade and the grace of God that kept him alive. He returned to his brigade command, now as a brigadier general, on 19 November 1864. "Why he was permitted to rejoin is something of a mystery since he was still unable to walk any real distance or to ride a horse. But perhaps the reason went beyond a friendly doctor's closing an understanding eye to his real condition. It was in the very spirit of the man who had identified himself so closely with . . . the Army of the Potomac."<sup>47</sup> By the end of the war Chamberlain had been wounded six times.<sup>48</sup> He had also seen the suffering of those around him. At Little Round Top alone, more than one third of his command was killed or wounded.<sup>49</sup> Chamberlain demonstrated remarkable strength and compassion for his men amidst it all. There is no question that Joshua L. Chamberlain had lived what Clausewitz had described as a realm of physical exertion and suffering.

#### War is the Realm of Uncertainty

"Three quarters of the factors on which action in war is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty," wrote Clausewitz. Because of the uncertainty, "a sensitive and discriminating judgment is called for; a skilled intelligence to scent out the truth."<sup>50</sup>

#### • Sensitive and Discriminating Judgment

In that Joshua Chamberlain had no military experience or training before the Civil War, the reality of uncertainty in war must have been quite disturbing. Yet, Chamberlain proved to have a natural high order of judgment that enabled him to see through

the fog of uncertainty. At Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Petersburg, Quaker Road, Five Oaks and other lesser battles Colonel/General Chamberlain demonstrated the soundness of his judgment in the face of enemy fire and maneuver. But here I want to mention two non-battle incidents that exemplify his sensitive and discriminating judgment in face of uncertain outcomes. Both show his sensitivity to the human nature of soldiers. The first, in May 1863, involved the transfer of 120 mutinous 2d Maine Regiment soldiers to the 20th Maine. They had signed three-year enlistment papers whereas the rest of the regiment had signed two-year enlistments and were headed home. The 120 soldiers arrived under guard. The guards marched with bayonets fixed. Chamberlain was ordered "to make them do duty, and to shoot them down if they refused."<sup>51</sup>

Chamberlain sought out the V Corps Commander, MG George Meade, and asked for permission to receive the replacements his own way. With compassion for the soldiers but uncertain of the outcome, Chamberlain fed the hungry men (they had not eaten for three days) and released the guard. He assigned them as individual replacements to his nine companies. He explained to them that "they were on his rolls as soldiers by authority of the United States; that he could not entertain them as civilian guests, but he would be glad to treat them as soldiers should be treated; and that they would lose no rights by obeying his orders."<sup>52</sup> He promised to look into their grievance. All but six yielded to Chamberlain's persuasions and melded into their new regiment. Chamberlain's intuitive judgment had been sensitive and



discriminating. Best of all he now had 114 badly needed replacements that in just over a month would be instrumental in the defense of Little Round Top at Gettysburg.

The second incident took place at Appomattox Court House 12 April 1865. Brevet Major General Chamberlain had been chosen as commander of troops of a three brigade formation of veteran units of the Army of the Potomac that would ceremonially receive the Confederate surrender of arms and colors. At his request, his original brigade, the 3d Brigade, to include the 20th Maine Regiment, comprised the front rank of the formation. Chamberlain wrote later that,

The momentous meaning of the occasion impressed me deeply. I resolved to mark it by some token of recognition, which could be no other than a salute of arms. (I was) well aware of the responsibility assumed, and of the criticism that would follow. . . . My main reason . . . was one for which I sought no authority nor asked forgiveness. Before us in proud humiliation stood the embodiment of manhood: men whom neither toils and sufferings, nor the fact of death, nor disaster, nor hopelessness could bend from their resolve; standing before us now, thin, worn, and famished, but erect, and with eyes looking level into ours, waking memories that bound us together as no other bond--was not such manhood to be welcomed back into a Union so tested and assured?<sup>53</sup>

As the Confederate columns passed by Chamberlain ordered the bugle to sound and for the Union formation, regiment by regiment, to go from the "order arms" to the old "carry"--the marching salute. General John B. Gordon, at the head of the long grey column, riding with downcast face and heavy spirit, recognized the

significance of the unexpected soldiers' salutation; he sat erect, head held high and returned the salute. He ordered each Confederate brigade to do the same--"honor answering honor." In Chamberlain's words: "On our part not a sound of trumpet more, nor roll of drum; not a cheer, nor word nor whisper of vain-gloring, nor motion of man standing again at the order, but an awed stillness rather, and breath-holding, as if it were the passing of the dead!"<sup>54</sup>

At the time, the future impact of this simple, noble salute by Joshua Chamberlain was uncertain; however, history has shown that it was an important and significant first step in the reunification of this great country of ours. Once again Chamberlain had demonstrated sensitive and discriminating judgment, a Clausewitzian requirement for "military genius."

#### ● Skilled Intelligence

According to Clausewitz the uncertainty of war requires a "skilled intelligence to scent out the truth." He qualifies that truism with the notion that "usually intellectual inadequacy will be shown up by indifferent achievement."<sup>55</sup> Chamberlain's achievements were far from indifferent. In reality he drew more from his intellectual background than his military experience. He joined the Army of the Potomac from academia. For seven years he had held a professorship at Bowdoin College in Maine. Earlier he had completed his studies at Bowdoin College and Bangor Theological Seminary. There is little question in my mind that he

possessed the skilled intelligence of a Clausewitzian "military genius."

#### War is the Realm of Chance

Clausewitz reminds the "military genius" that "since all information and assumptions are open to doubt, and with chance at work everywhere, the commander continually finds that things are not as he expected. . . . If the mind is to emerge unscathed from this relentless struggle with the unforeseen, two qualities are indispensable: first, an intellect that, even in the darkest hour, retains some glimmerings of the inner light which leads to truth; and second, the courage to follow this faint light wherever it may lead."<sup>56</sup> Courage in this case is defined as determination.

#### • Intellect

Intellect as it relates to chance is more than intelligence; it also includes the idea of rapid and accurate decision based on quick recognition of the truth. A certain "presence of mind" is necessary to remain calm in the face of great danger. Clausewitz states that, "The expression 'presence of mind' precisely conveys the speed and immediacy of the help provided by the intellect."<sup>57</sup> Another Clausewitzian thought is important to this discussion. The "military genius" needs a "sense of locality" which is the "faculty of quickly and accurately grasping the topography of any area." It is an act of imagination.<sup>58</sup>

The battle of Little Round Top is an excellent example of Chamberlain's capacity to operate in the realm of chance. The

battle of Gettysburg was in itself a chance meeting engagement of two great armies; one blue, one grey. Without recounting the battle of Little Round Top again, I think it is obvious that Colonel Joshua L. Chamberlain demonstrated exemplary imagination and intellect throughout the battle. His use of terrain, the L formation, the hinge maneuver and the bayonet charge from the defense are but a few examples. His sense of locality, presence of mind and capacity to make rapid and accurate decisions are a matter of historical record. Chamberlain's biographer, Willard M. Wallace, in Soul of the Lion, wrote: "Chamberlain became a great infantry officer, and among his valuable qualities were a kind of intuitive grasp of where the attack would come (a grasp based in good part on a knowledge of terrain, weapons and men) and a gift for improvisation in meeting emergencies."<sup>59</sup>

● Determination

"The role of determination is to limit the agonies of doubt and perils of hesitation when the motives for action are inadequate," wrote Clausewitz. Determination is the courage to accept responsibility in the face of moral danger.<sup>60</sup>

Certainly Chamberlain demonstrated determination at Gettysburg and Petersburg. Another courageous example of his determination was at Quaker Road, 29 March 1865. He was leading his brigade against a determined confederate defense. The fighting was close in and fierce. At one point his horse reared only to be hit by a bullet aimed at Chamberlain. Still the bullet passed thru the horse's neck and hit Chamberlain just below the

heart. The bullet tore his uniform to the elbow and bruised his left arm before it was deflected by a leather case of field orders and a brass-mounted hand mirror in his uniform pocket. The bullet penetrated the skin and slid around two ribs before it came through the flesh and uniform near the back seam. Horse and rider were stunned. Chamberlain slumped forward from loss of blood and shock. As his division commander, General Griffen, rode up, Chamberlain fought his way back to consciousness. The general's voice coupled with the high, keening rebel yell of Confederate infantry breaking through the right of his line were enough to spur Chamberlain back into action. He was determined to rally his men. His hat was gone, his uniform torn and covered with blood, his body weakened by shock and wounds; yet, he galloped along the line on his wounded horse shouting encouragement to his men. When his wounded horse finally collapsed, Chamberlain found another mount and continued to lead his men. His biographer wrote that, "By the sheer force of his personality and the spectacle of unquenchable courage he presented, he got them (his men) to halt, face about, and reform again to confront the grey wolf-pack."<sup>61</sup> Because of Chamberlain's raw courage and unwavering determination, his brigade was able to find victory that day. The new FM 22-100 goes on to say that "That victory--made possible by Chamberlain's great leadership--seriously weakened the Confederate position and was critical in leading to General Lee's surrender within two weeks."<sup>62</sup>

### Military Genius

Similarly it could be shown by example that Joshua Chamberlain met the other Clausewitzian criteria for "military genius," that he possessed a longing for honor and renown, had a thorough grasp of national policy, and was a man of character. There is no doubt in my mind that Carl von Clausewitz would agree that Brevet Major General Joshua L. Chamberlain was a "military genius." I am convinced at this point that, yes, Joshua Chamberlain is an excellent example of leadership. Junior officers and noncommissioned officers will certainly profit by the study of this intelligent, courageous, imaginative civil war general. Many of the leadership characteristics he demonstrated will translate to the battlefields of the future.

But, is he the best example?



JOSHUA L. CHAMBERLAIN

END NOTES

1. General Edward C. Meyer, "The Service Chiefs Report: Army, A Ready Land Force," Defense, 8 April 1983, p. 9.
2. John O. Marsh, Secretary of the Army, and General Edward C. Meyer, Chief of Staff of the Army, "Total Army Goals," 1982.
3. General Edward C. Meyer, "Thoughts on Leadership," Military Review, May 1983, p. 50.
4. Ibid., p. 46.
5. Caspar W. Weinberger, Report of the Secretary of Defense to the Congress on the 1984 Budget..., 1 February 1983, p. 48.
6. Department of the Army Field Manual 100-5, Operations, 20 August 1982, pp. 2-5.
7. Department of the Army Field Manual 22-100, Military Leadership, Coordinating draft not approved DA doctrine, January 1983, p. vi.
8. Lieutenant Colonel Boyd M. Harris, "A New Army Emphasis on Leadership: Be, Know, Do," Military Review, February 1983, p. 67.
9. DA FM 22-100, op. cit., p. vi.
10. Ibid., p. 1-12.
11. Will and M. Wallace, Soul of the Lion, New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1950, pp. 28-38.
12. Harris, op. cit., p. 66 and Michael Shaara, The Killly Angels, New York: Ballantine Books, 1974, p. 360.
13. Ibid., p. 66.
14. DA FM 22-100, op. cit., p. 2-1.
15. Richard Nixon, Leaders, New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1982, p. 5.
16. Carl von Clausewitz, On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Poret, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 94.
17. Ibid., pp. 100-112.
18. Ibid., p. 101.



19. Wallace, op. cit., p. 36.
20. Ibid., p. 42.
21. Ibid., pp. 53-62.
22. Ibid., p. 68.
23. US Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs, Medal of Honor Recipients 1863-1978, Washington, DC, 1979, p. 54.
24. John J. Pullen, The Twentieth Maine, New York: J. B. Lippencott Co., 1957, p. 90.
25. Clausewitz, op. cit., p. 101.
26. Department of History, United States Military Academy, Campaign Atlas to the American Civil War, West Point, New York, 1978, map 36b.
27. Shaara, op. cit., pp. 199-201.
28. Colonel William C. Oates, The War Between the Union and the Confederacy and Its Lost Opportunities, 1905, republished by Press of Morningside Bookstore, Dayton, Ohio, 1974, pp. 206-213.
29. Pullen, op. cit., p. 109.
30. Department of History, USMA, op. cit., map 36b.
31. Oliver W. Norton, Strong Vincent and His Brigade at Gettysburg, July 2, 1863, Chicago, 1909, pp. 6-8.
32. Pullen, op. cit., p. 38.
33. Norton, op. cit., p. 38.
34. Oates, op. cit., p. 214.
35. Norton, op. cit., p. 39.
36. Pullen, op. cit., p. 112.
37. Oates, op. cit., p. 214.
38. Colonel William C. Oates, "Gettysburg--The Battle on the Right," Southern Historical Society Papers Volume VI, Richmond, Va.: G. W. Gary & Co., 1878, p. 177.
39. Norton, op. cit., pp. 39-40.
40. Pullen, op. cit., p. 124.

41. Ibid.
42. Oates, The War Between the Union and the Confederacy  
... op. cit., p. 219.
43. Clausewitz, op. cit., p. 101.
44. Wallace, op. cit., p. 131.
45. Ibid., p. 132.
46. Ibid., p. 136.
47. Ibid., p. 138.
48. Harris, op. cit., p. 66.
49. Pullen, op. cit., pp. 126-127.
50. Clausewitz, op. cit., p. 101.
51. Pullen, op. cit., p. 78.
52. Ibid., p. 80.
53. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, The Passing of the Armies,  
New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1915, p. 260.
54. Ibid., p. 261.
55. Clausewitz, op. cit., p. 101.
56. Ibid., p. 102.
57. Ibid., p. 104.
58. Ibid., p. 109.
59. Wallace, op. cit., p. 94.
60. Clausewitz, op. cit., pp. 102-103.
61. Wallace, op. cit., pp. 144-149.
62. DA FM 22-100, op. cit., p. 1-11.